



BUNNY
RABBIT'S
STORY

By AMY PRENTICE

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Aunt Amy's Animal Stories

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A. L. BURT COMPANY
PUBLISHERS **NEW YORK**

Aunt Amy's Animal Stories

BUNNY RABBIT'S STORY

By **AMY PRENTICE**

11



**With Twenty-Six Illustrations
and a Frontispiece in Colors
BY J. WATSON DAVIS**

**A. L. BURT COMPANY, PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK**       

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BUNNY RABBIT'S STORY
By Amy Prentice





Mr. Plodding Turtle reading the poetry that Bunny Rabbit wrote.

Bunny Rabbit's Story.



BUNNY RABBIT'S STORY.

UNDER the hill where the wild roses grow, Mr. Bunny Rabbit lives with his wife and five fluffy little children, who frisk and dance about on the grass all the long summer day, except when Mr. Fox or Mr. Hawk comes around hunting for dinner, and then they dart into their hole, every tiny tail trembling with excitement.



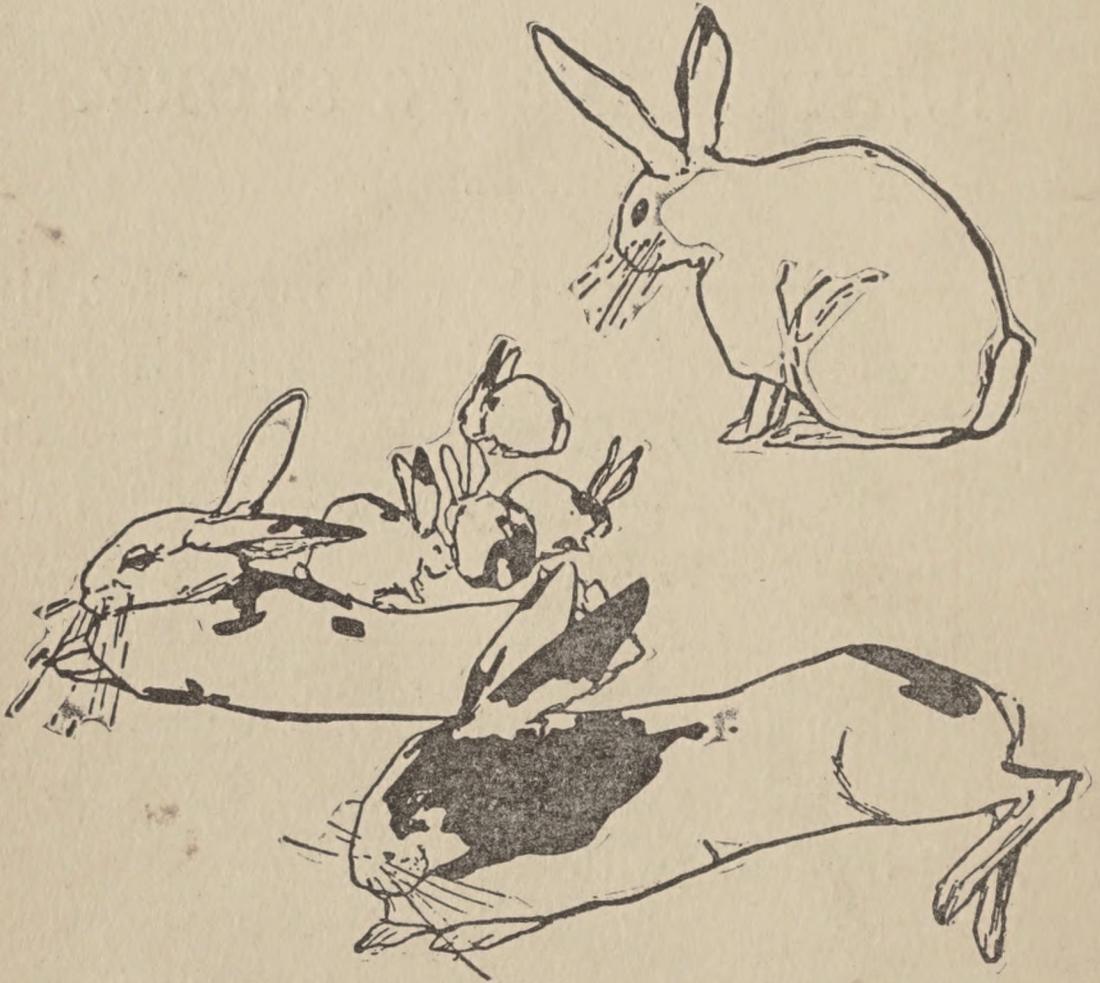
Mr. Bunny Rabbit.

On the other side of the hill, near the creek, live Mr. Plodding Turtle and his wife, and near by the home of the Turtles, your Aunt Amy often goes on sunny afternoons to listen to the bird concerts, or the frog operas.

Sometimes it happens that Mr. Bunny Rabbit

or Mr. Turtle comes out for a visit, and then it is your Aunt Amy hears of very many queer things, as she will try to tell you.

Now Mr. Turtle and your Aunt Amy have known each other a number of years. Perhaps



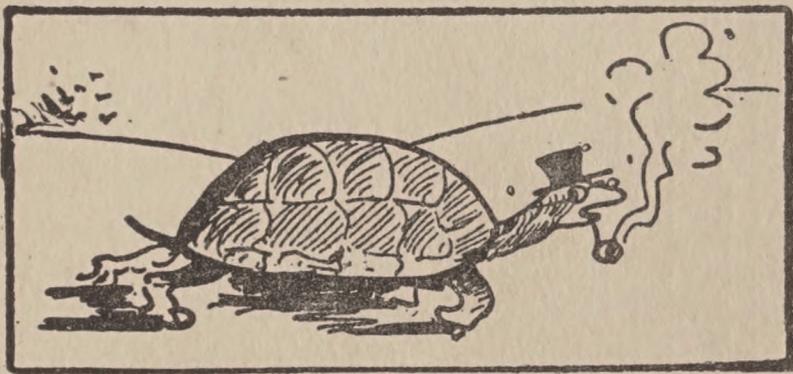
Mr. Rabbit, Mrs. Rabbit, and Sonny Bunny.

before you were born he told her with tears in his eyes about the time when he and his wife saved up their money that they might go to the circus, and then didn't have a chance to see it after all.

Your Aunt Amy knew something of this already,

for Bunny Rabbit had told her many times, laughing until his long ears nearly slipped down his throat at what he thought was a very funny story, and this is what he told :

“ Old Mr. Turtle woke up early one morning and put his head out of his shell. The weather was very cold, so he pulled himself back and began to take another little nap ; but Mrs. Turtle wasn't going to have him fooling the time away, so she



Mr. Plodding Turtle Going to the Circus.

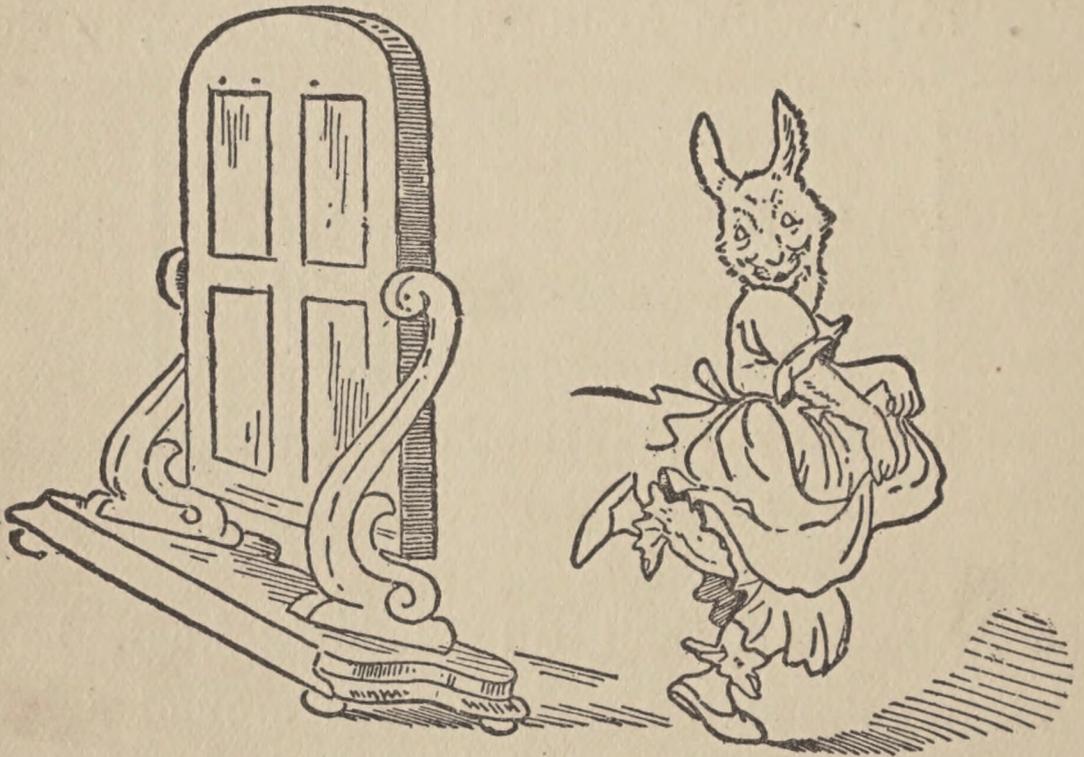
pounded on his shell till Plodding knew he'd have to get moving. He walked around a few minutes to warm up, and his wife said to him sharply :

“ ‘ Don't you know that we've got to go to the circus ? Why don't you move lively ? ’ ”

“ ‘ I am moving lively, my dear, ’ Mr. Turtle said, mild as milk, as he began to get breakfast, and his wife snapped out as cross as two sticks :

“Don't you know that the circus comes off in three weeks from to-day, and it's more than a mile from here? We ought to start right away.’

“Mr. Turtle he kept quiet, and soon had breakfast ready; but his wife was in such a hurry that she wouldn't wait for him to wash the dishes, so they left everything on the table and started. On their way they stopped every day and ate



Mrs. Bunny Getting Ready for the Circus.

bugs till they couldn't eat any more, and then kept on again.

“One day some leaves began to rustle in the distance, and, looking up, Mr. Turtle saw old Pop Lizard coming toward him.

“‘Hello!’ said Pop Lizard.

“‘Same to you,’ said Mr. and Mrs. Turtle.

“‘I just wanted to tell you,’ said he, ‘that the circus has been put off for a week, and you’re likely to get there ahead of time.’

MR. TURTLE AT THE CIRCUS.

“‘Much obliged to you,’ said Mr. Turtle, shaking his flipper at old Pop Lizard. ‘We’ll take a stroll through the woods for about a quarter of a mile, and kill time during that week.’

“And so they did. When the circus began Mr. and Mrs. Turtle had front seats. Mrs. Rabbit and I sat right behind them, with Chucky Squirrel side of me, and all the fellows scattered around wherever they could find a chance; but the show hadn’t more than well got started, when all hands yelled for Mr. Turtle to bend his back because they couldn’t look over his head. Of course neither he nor his wife could do anything of the kind, so the rest of us just naturally put him out of the tent, and he didn’t see the show after all.”

Then Bunny Rabbit laughed again, and he was still laughing when he started for home before the Owl family should come out hunting.

That was some time ago, and now Mr. Turtle had come to tell your Aunt Amy of Bunny's pranks.

THE ELEPHANT'S JOKE.

"Bunny thinks he's terribly smart when he tells about my wife and I going to the circus; but he don't speak of the joke he played on the elephant that very day," Mr. Turtle said as he settled himself down for a chat.

"Did Mr. Bunny play a joke on an elephant?" your Aunt Amy asked in surprise, and Mr. Turtle replied:

"You see when the circus was over, all the animals were invited to supper by those who belonged to the show, and after they'd eaten as much as they could, with never a thought of how hungry Mrs. Turtle and I might be, Bunny climbed up on a stool to comb out his fur, when Mr. Elephant came up softly to play him a trick.

"Tip was the elephant's name, and he thought it great fun to fool with fellows smaller than himself, so he pulled the stool out from under Bunny, letting him fall to the ground all of a heap.

“Bunny wasn't hurt much; but he felt angry all through, and said as he scrambled to his feet:

“‘You're no gentleman, Tip Elephant! That's a mean trick, and I'll get even for it before I'm much older!’

“‘Now don't be angry,’ Mr. Elephant said.



Tip's Joke on Bunny Rabbit.

‘There's been no great harm done; I only meant it for a joke.’

“Mr. Rabbit he walked around and around scolding at a great rate, till all the people got tired of hearing him sputter, and even Mr. Elephant

forgot what he'd done. Then Bunny saw his chance. Tip was sitting on a tub, showing the visitors one of the tricks he did in the circus, when Mr. Rabbit slipped up and kicked the tub over.

"Of course old Tip Elephant tumbled down slap, bang, whiz; but Bunny wasn't counting on his sprawling quite so far, and hadn't jumped out of the way. One edge of Tip's foot struck him on the nose, and it was a good two hours before Mrs. Rabbit could stop the bleeding."

"That must have taught Mr. Bunny a lesson that he won't soon forget," your Aunt Amy suggested, and Mr. Turtle said snappishly:

"He hasn't got a memory any longer than his tail," and having spoken thus peevishly he began to hunt around for his pipe and tobacco.

BUNNY RABBIT HUNTS FOR ELEPHANTS.

"Bunny Rabbit isn't as smart as he thinks he is," Mr. Turtle continued half to himself as he lighted his pipe. "Did you ever hear about his getting all his friends down here to the pond to see an elephant? Well, it shows how thick-headed he really is. One day he went around to



Bunny Rabbit hunting for elephants, Page II.

Bunny Rabbit

every Rabbit he knew, telling that there was an elephant in this pond near the brook.

“Said he knew it was so because he had heard him swimming around, though he had never really seen him. Well, he got all the Rabbits from miles around to come down here while he drove the elephant out, and when the crowd had gathered at the bank, Bunny began to throw sticks into the water.

“There wasn't any elephant there; but more than a dozen frogs jumped out, making a great splashing in the water, and the oldest of them hopped on a rock to make a speech.

“‘You Rabbit people are terribly foolish, and it's time you realized it. The night Bunny thought he heard an elephant I was hunting for minnows, and made the noise that frightened him so badly. You fellows had better go home and button your ears back, so you won't hear so much that doesn't amount to anything.’

“Then Mr. Frog jumped into the water ker-chug, and Bunny's friends went off looking almost as foolish as they really are. Bunny Rabbit ought to stop telling about my troubles, if he don't want me to laugh at his. He thinks he's the wisest fellow in the world, and has even been writing

poetry to make Tip Elephant angry. You see he don't remember that if he hadn't kicked the tub out from under Tip he wouldn't have been hurt, and so he's trying to get even by sending a lot of verses around about him. I've got a copy of them somewhere in my shell, and I'll hunt for it if you like."

Even though your Aunt Amy had not cared to hear the verses, she could not well have said other than that she would be glad to have Mr. Turtle repeat them, and this was indeed the fact.

Then Mr. Turtle drew in his head, and after a few moments poked it out again as he said :

THE ESCAPE FROM THE CIRCUS.

"Here's what Bunny wrote. I don't want you to think I call it poetry, for it's nothing but rubbish, and if you can sit still long enough I'll read it to you."

Then, slowly, Mr. Plodding Turtle read what I have copied down here :

A jolly old elephant, lively and gay,
Ran off from the circus one bright summer day :
He packed up his trunk and he said to the ape :
"I'm tired of circuses, let us escape."

The ape, who was weary of peanuts and cake,
Responded quite promptly : " I'll gladly forsake
The tent and the sawdust and pink lemonade,
For the freedom of forest and cool everglade."

They wandered afar in the quiet of night,
A strange pair of tramps, and a wonderful sight ;
The horses and cattle quick scampered away—
For they never had seen such a pair in their day.



The Circus Tramps.

The elephant ate up a cabbage patch all,
A fine field of corn and a stack of hay tall,
While the ape gobbled apples and plums from the fence
With delight, as he cried : " Well, this thing is immense.

They ate up the gardens, they ate up the corn,
They ate in the eve and they ate in the morn.
They ate in the sunshine, they ate in the shade,
And then they went back to their pink lemonade.

No longer they're bothered by tramp sentiment,
 As they loll in the sawdust there under the tent.
 They were tramps for a week—but no longer they roam
 From the carrots and peanuts of their circus home.



After Mr. Elephant Got Back.

“Now do you really call that poetry?” Mr. Turtle asked as he ceased reading and looked around questioningly. “Yet Bunny Rabbit thinks it's great, and his wife says she believes he could write a real book if he tried. She has forgotten how near he

came to being the death of little Cockey Rock.”

“I am certain that must be a new story, Mr. Turtle,” your Aunt Amy said. “I never supposed he would hurt a chicken,” and Mr. Turtle cried in surprise:

“What! didn't you ever hear that Bunny tried his hand at being a doctor? He'd kept it up, too, if he hadn't come so near making serious trouble for Mrs. Plymouth Rock.

WHEN THE CHICKEN WAS SICK.

“It was this way: Bunny was looking around the farm-yard which is nearest his home, thinking to find some one there who had nothing better to do than talk with him, when he happened to see Mrs. Plymouth Rock's youngest son.—You remember little Cocky Rock who had the mumps the second day after he came out of the shell. There is no question but that Mrs. Rock was very careless in allowing him out of doors while the wind was east; but she always believed it did children good to tramp around, no matter what the weather might be, and the amount of it all was that poor little Cocky came very near dying.

“If you remember, he was a weak child, even after his brothers and sisters put on their first pin-feathers, and sat in the warmest corner of the farm-yard while all the other members of the family were out gathering worms.

“Now it so happened that Cocky was doubled over with a bad cold, which afterward brought on an attack of the pip, when Mr. Rabbit came along, and there's no question but that Cocky looked pale and thin.

“‘Hello!’ Bunny said in that prying way of his, ‘What’s the matter with you?’”

“‘Mother says I’m sick,’ Cocky replied feebly.

“‘Sick!’ Bunny cried. ‘You’re worse than that already. Have you had the doctor?’”

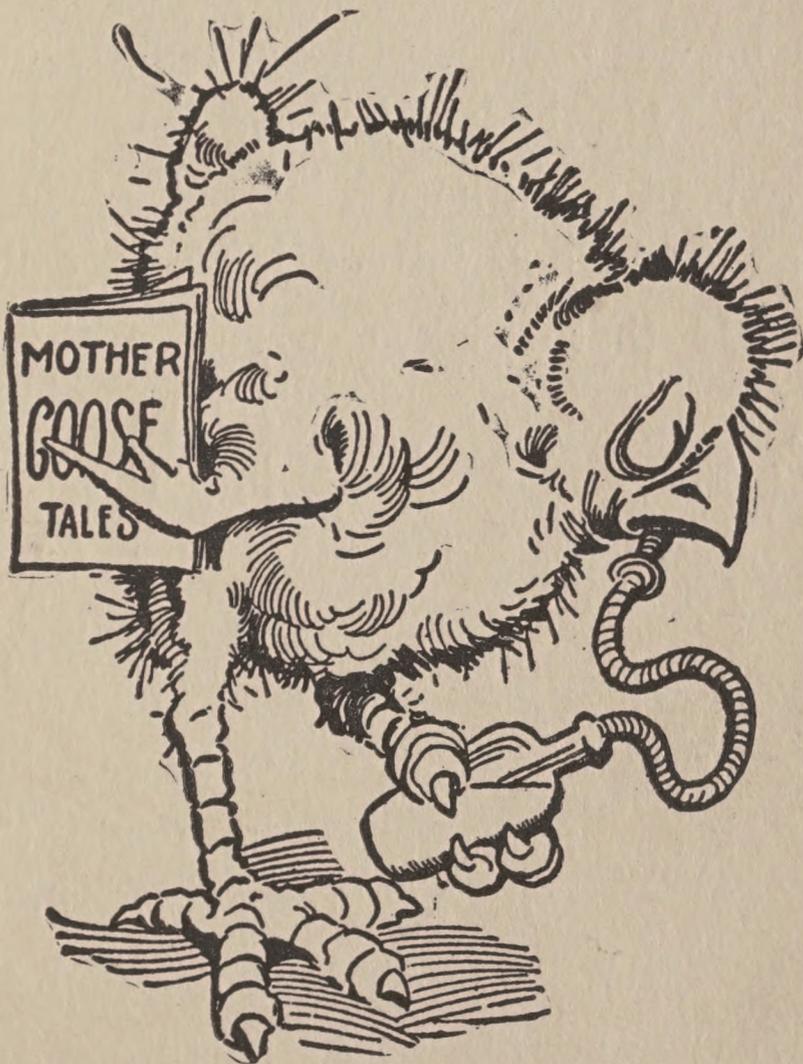


Mr. Rabbit Decides to Become a Doctor.

“‘Not yet,’ Cocky said in a whisper. ‘Mother says she don’t have any faith in Doctor Duck, and she’s trying to fix me up on herbs.’”

“‘Stuff and nonsense!’ Bunny cried, thinking he knew all about everything. ‘What you want is something to keep you amused, and milk extract four or five times a day. *I* can bring you around all right.’

“‘How will you do it?’ Cocky asked wheezy-



Poor Little Cocky Rock.

like, and, being young, he believed everything that was told him.

“‘Leave it to me, and I'll show you,’ Bunny

said, bold as brass. 'Be down behind the cabbage-patch in half an hour, and I'll have there that which will make you a well chicken in less than a week. I've been thinking of setting up for a doctor quite a while, and told my wife this very morning that I was going to begin right away.'

"Then Mr. Rabbit he hurried off, and in half an hour he was back with a big bundle under his front arm. He had a Mother Goose book for Cocky to read when he needed to be amused, and a nursing-bottle half full of what he called milk extract. If that chicken wasn't a sight when



Mrs. Plymouth Rock Going to Help her Baby.

Bunny marched him into the farm-yard, then I hope never to see another.

"The artist, Bossy Calf, was there, and he made the picture, which I afterward found in the pasture. Just run your eye over it and tell me what you think. Fancy how poor Mrs. Rock must have felt when she saw her baby!"

Mr. Turtle unfolded a paper which he had been

holding in his flipper, and here is a fair copy of the artist's work.

"I've heard that Mr. Rabbit did really start out for a doctor the same day he fixed little Cockey Rock up so fine, and there's no saying how much mischief he might have done before people could stop him, if he hadn't run across Mr. Fox.

"You seem to have a lot of new stories to-day," your Aunt Amy interrupted. "I surely would like to hear how Mr. Fox put a stop to Mr. Bunny's being a doctor."

Then Mr. Turtle told this story :

MR. FOX'S PITIFUL STORY.

"You see Bunny Rabbit was skipping along thinking how much money he would make while being a doctor, and not heeding anything else, when he came bang into Mr. Fox, who was standing under a lot of vines, as if he had been caught by them, and couldn't get away.

"Bunny Rabbit he didn't want to have very much business with Mr. Fox, of course not, and he stopped as quick as he knew how, looking all around to see which way he should run.

"'Where are you going, Mr. Rabbit?' Mr. Fox

asked as if he was trying to keep the tears out of his eyes.

“ ‘I’ve got lots of business on hand to-day, Mr. Fox, and I don’t know how I’m going to get through with it,’ Bunny Rabbit replied as he began to hop away.

“ ‘You wouldn’t leave me here to die, would you, Mr. Rabbit? I hear you are a doctor now, and you ought to cure everybody, no matter if there has been ugly feelings between you and some others,’ Mr. Fox said, sweet as honey. ‘I’m in terrible pain here, for these vines and thorns are holding me fast. If you could only cut some of them away, and then tie up the wounds on my back, I would tell everybody you was the greatest doctor that ever lived.’

“ That kind of talk tickled Bunny Rabbit so much that he went right up to help Mr. Fox, who had tried more than a hundred times to eat him, and he hadn’t more than got within reach when Mr. Fox jumped on him, for he was only making believe when he said he was tangled up in the vines.

“ Bunny Rabbit got away, though ; but he had a terribly sore back for a good many weeks, because Mr. Fox got a big mouthful of meat, and came near getting the whole rabbit. After that



Mr. Fox deceives Bunny Rabbit. Page 20.

Bunny Rabbit

Bunny seemed to forget all about wanting to be a doctor."

Mr. Turtle had hardly more than finished the story when who should come up with a hop, skip and a jump, but Mr. Bunny Rabbit himself.

"What's going on here?" he asked, fiercely curling his whiskers, and Mr. Turtle crept into his shell until nothing could be seen but the tip of his nose. "While Plodding Turtle was having such a good time telling stories about me, I suppose he forgot to say anything about causing the death of Mrs. Cochin China's youngest boy, didn't he?"

"I hadn't much to do with that," Mr. Turtle said in feeble protest, and your Aunt Amy would have interfered to prevent what looked very much like the beginning of a quarrel, but that Mr. Bunny cried angrily :

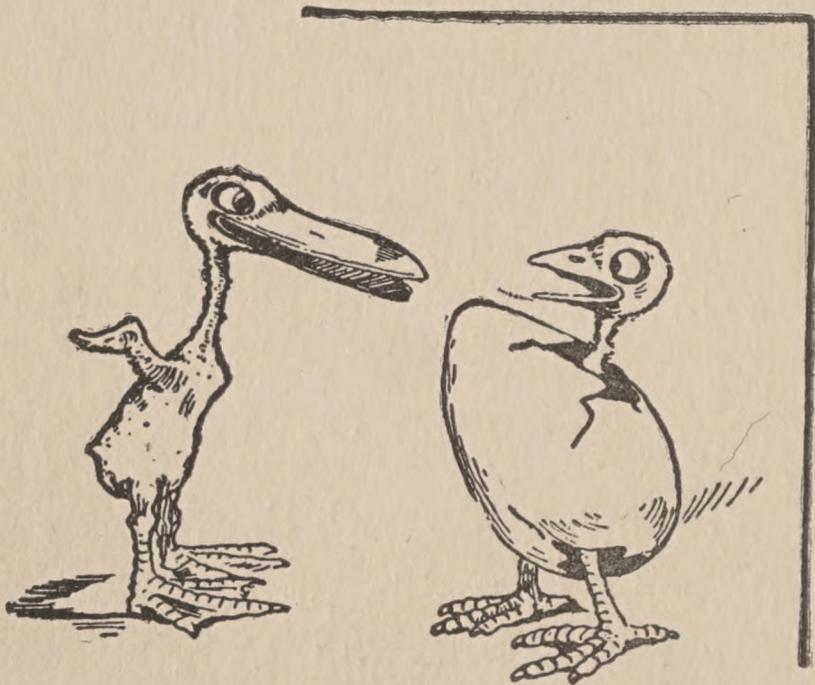


Mr. Bunny
Arrives.

MR. TURTLE'S GREAT SCHEME.

"You had just so much that the poor little baby was scalded to death, and that before he'd got even the sign of a pin-feather. I had it all

from young Webby Duck, and a more truthful child can't be found in any farm-yard. He says he was out walking near the old stone wall one day, when who should he see but the little China baby walking around inside his own egg-shell. He had stuck his head and legs through, and was toddling around looking very well pleased with himself.



Mr. Turtle's Educated Chicken.

“‘Hello!’ says young Webby. ‘What’s the matter with you? Why don’t you come out of doors?’

“‘I’m out as far as I want to be,’ little China said with a grin. ‘Old Mr. Turtle put me up to this game, and it’s a great one.’

“‘I’d like to know what it is?’ Webby said,

trying to guess the riddle, for that's what the baby looked like.

“‘It shows that I'm too smart to go around as you do, though I'd never have thought of the trick if Mr. Turtle hadn't happened around just in time to prevent me from coming entirely out of my shell. You see when the bad boys come here and begin to pitch stones at the family, all I'll have to do will be to pull in my head and feet, and they'll never notice me, thinking I'm only a poor old egg.’

“‘So Mr. Turtle put you up to that, did he?’ Webby said with a wink of his left eye. ‘Well, all I can say is that I hope you won't get into any trouble, trying to copy after the Turtle style of getting around.’

“‘It wasn't long after that before the bad boys went into the farm-yard and began to throw stones; but Plodding's educated chicken pulled in his head and legs, and kept real quiet.

“‘Look here!’ one of the boys cried as he came upon the covering to Mr. Turtle's young friend. ‘Here's an egg! Isn't it strange that it should have been left on the ground?’

“‘Yes,’ said a second boy, ‘and I'll take it home and boil it.’

“‘But it’s a cracked egg,’ another fellow cried, and the first one replied as he picked young China up :

“‘Then I’ll put it in extra hot water and boil it quick.’

“This scared Mrs. China’s child so much that he didn’t dare even to squeak, and in a twinkling the bad boys had boiled spring chicken on the half-shell for a lunch, while old Mr. Turtle began to think, perhaps, that it isn’t safe for every fellow to carry his house on his back.”

“I may carry my house around with me ; but that doesn’t prove that I can’t tell the difference between Mr. Man and a stone image,” Mr. Turtle cried angrily, and Bunny Rabbit began to look a bit foolish.

It surely did seem as if Mr. Turtle and Mr. Rabbit would have a downright quarrel, and your Aunt Amy was eager to prevent it ; but before she could speak a word Plodding Turtle began.

HOW MR. FOX CHEATED BUNNY RABBIT.

“I’ll tell you about it,” Mr. Turtle said to your Aunt Amy, and without waiting to learn if she

wanted to hear the story, he began eagerly. "One day Bunny Rabbit's grandfather gave him a lot of sweet apples, and he was carrying them home when he met old Mr. Fox, who had lived so long that all his teeth had dropped out, and, because he couldn't chew meat, he had to eat whatever didn't need much grinding.

" 'Those are my apples,' old Mr. Fox said, wishing he had teeth enough to grind Mr. Rabbit up into pie.

" Of course Bunny explained how he got them; but Mr. Fox sat up, bold as brass, and said they never belonged to Mr. Rabbit's grandfather at all.

" 'Mr. Man gave them to me as much as a week ago,' Mr. Fox said, 'and if you're an honest Rabbit you'll go with me to him and find out about it.'

" Bunny Rabbit, knowing his grandfather had really given him the apples, thought the easiest way to prevent a quarrel would be to go to Mr. Man and ask him about it, so he agreed; but said he didn't know where to find Mr. Man at that time of day.

" 'I'll find him for you,' Mr. Fox said with a grin. 'We'll ask him if your grandfather ever owned any apples, and if he doesn't say anything,

not wanting to call anybody a liar, you'll agree to give the apples to me ?'

"Bunny Rabbit was so certain Mr. Man would tell Mr. Fox the apples belonged to Grandfather Rabbit, that he promised to settle it in that way, and then Mr. Fox marched straight off to where a stone image stood in a grove.

"Mr. Fox asked about the apples in a loud voice, making a long story out of it, and of course the image couldn't say a word, so Bunny Rabbit had to give up all that his grandfather had given to him, for he never so much as guessed the trick Mr. Fox had played on him."

"Mr. Fox may have fooled me then ; but I didn't try to pay it off on a poor lamb, as I know you did," Bunny Rabbit said sharply.

"You seem to know almost everything all of a sudden," Mr. Turtle snapped, and Bunny replied innocently :

"I never put foolish ideas into people's heads, as I've heard you did over on Squirm lake."

Your Aunt Amy was really anxious to hear the story, and it must be confessed that she intended to encourage Mr. Bunny when she said :

"I would like to know what was done at Squirm lake."



Mr. Fox asks about the apples. Page 26.

Bunny Rabbit

Mr. Turtle pulled his head into his shell, and Bunny Rabbit began the story, watching old Plodding keenly all the while.

WHEN MR. GOOSE AND MR. FROG WORE CLOTHES.

“ This is the way of it, as Mr. Crow told me, and he's ready to say it's the solemn truth. Old Daddy Turtle, who spends his time running around telling what he thinks are funny things about me, used to live near Squirm lake, and his nearest neighbors were the Gooses and the Frogs. He struck up quite chummy with Mr. Cilly Goose and Professor Green Frog—was all the time telling them what fine folks they were, so's they'd throw something nice to eat in his way.

“ Now you know Squirm lake is where summer boarders come in hot weather to fight flies and scold about the food, and all of them got into the habit of walking down to the lake when they didn't have anything else to do, which was mostly all the time. They'd put on their good clothes and toddle around the shore saying, because they didn't know what else to say:

“ ‘ Oh, look at the *bee*-utiful swan ! ’

“ ‘ Will you cast your eyes on that handsome frog !’

“ At first Cilly and Green didn't pay any attention to the stuff ; but old Daddy Turtle must needs stick his nose in, and he said one night when he was feeling as if he'd like to have somebody go out and hunt up a supper for him :



Professor Frog Before He took Mr. Turtle's Advice.

“ ‘ You fellows don't seem to understand where you are at. Can't you hear the city folks praising you ? Why don't you put on some style, and be in the swim ?’

“ ‘ How can we ?’ Mr. Goose asked, and Plodding promised to fix the whole thing up next morning, so of course he got a good supper without being obliged to hunt for it very much.

“ Next morning Mr. Goose was rigged out in a coat and vest, same's Daddy Turtle told him he

ought to have, with a terribly high piccadilly collar and a tall hat. Professor Frog wasn't the right shape to fit clothes very much; but Plodding fixed him up with a low standing collar and a swell derby hat.



Dressed for the City Folks.

“After he had got them up in that style Mr. Turtle sat on the bank to hear what the city folks would say, and the swells strutted back and forth

looking at each other till Mr. Goose began to find fault with Professor Frog's collar.

“ ‘Why don't you wear something that folks can see? That thing around your neck looks like a shoe-string.’

“ ‘It's all right,’ Professor Frog said as he jumped up on a mud-bank. ‘The very best people wear the same kind.’

“ ‘Just fancy what a sight I'd be with that little linen band!’ Mr. Goose said, in a very disagreeable tone. ‘This neck of mine was made for stylish collars, and that's what I've got, for Mr. Turtle told me so. That hat of yours.—Well, it's a disgrace to the lake!’

“ ‘Think what a figure I'd be in that collar of yours,’ Professor Frog said with a grin. ‘It might do if I was in the last stages of a sore throat. Then those clothes of yours! Awful, simply awful! I tell you my outfit is the style!’

“ ‘You don't know anything about it,’ and now Mr. Goose began to lose his temper. ‘Such an outfit as yours wouldn't do at all for a stylish figure like mine.’

“ ‘Well, they kept on in that strain for five minutes or more, while Mr. Turtle sat on the bank wondering whether he dared to open his mouth or

not, and then they began regularly fighting till the goose came within less than an inch of swallowing the frog. After that, with collars torn, clothes muddy, and hats smashed, they sat down on the shore trying to get their breath.

“‘I guess the style is to wear what suits you best,’ Mr. Goose said sadly, as he smoothed his ruffled feathers.

“‘You’ve hit the truth of it now,’ Professor Frog agreed, and then he glared at Mr. Turtle in a way that wasn’t at all friendly.

“Plodding Turtle began to think it was time for him to make a move, and he started off the best he knew how, which wasn’t any too quick, for after a little while Professor Frog and Mr. Goose decided that it would be a good idea to tumble the old fellow into the water; but then he was among the bulrushes where they couldn’t get at him handily. Just take notice that the next day he and his wife moved away from Squirm lake, and haven’t been back there since.”

“You don’t dare go up there either,” Mr. Turtle said snappily, as he showed the tip of his nose. “If Professor Frog ever gets the chance, he’ll serve you out in great shape on account of that poetry you wrote.”

"You don't know anything about it," Bunny Rabbit replied uneasily, hopping about as if he had it in his mind to run away.

By this time it seemed to your Aunt Amy that, in order to hear the greatest number of stories, it would be well to let Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Turtle tell of each other's failings, therefore she remained silent, and Mr. Turtle said sharply :

MR. FROG'S LOVE STORY.

"Poetry isn't the only thing I can bring up against you, Mr. Bunny Rabbit, and we may as well have the whole business out here and now. First, I'll read what you wrote about Professor Frog, and then I'm going to tell how you caused the death of Jack Coon.

"Here's his poetry," Mr. Turtle said as he climbed on a log in order that he might the better be seen and heard, and then read these lines :

The bull-frog loved the Widow Crow,
But wasn't fond of black,
And said, "I'll never marry you
For taste in dress you lack.

"If you were like the robin red,
Or like the jay-bird blue,

I'd say, 'My dear, come fly with me,
And be my sweet-heart true.'

"But I'm afraid to marry you,
When you wear your clothes of black;
I'd always fear your husband dear
From crow-land would fly back."



The Widow and the Lover.

"You need not fret," the crow replied,
"I'd never marry thee.
While true you have a green-back rare,
I cannot spend it, see?"

"I'm looking for a man with gold,
Who has it in his pack,
And not a hopping bull-frog bold,
With green-backs on his back."

“Now what do you think of that?” Mr. Turtle asked as he ceased reading. “It is not only the worst kind of stuff, but a regular slur on Professor Frog.”

“You think you are awful smart, don't you?” Bunny cried, suddenly looking up from the clover he had been pretending to eat. “While you are about it, why don't you tell how you got poor little Miss Lamb to spend her time loitering around the streets looking for Mary, just as if there could be two lambs to follow one girl to school?”

“It wasn't my fault if she didn't find the right girl,” Mr. Turtle cried as a blush overspread his hard cheek. “Why didn't Miss Lamb stay where she was till Mary came along?”

“Because she'd been gray-headed with waiting, if she hadn't starved to death first,” and Bunny danced to and fro in wild delight because of having such good proof that he had vexed Mr. Turtle. “Suppose we hear all about it, if you've got through reading poetry?”

“Give me time first to tell how you made Mr. Jack Coon commit suicide,” Mr. Turtle said sharply.

THE LAMB GOES HUNTING FOR MARY.

“Never mind about that; I’m going to explain how you persuaded Miss Lamb to act foolishly, same’s Mr. Goose and Professor Frog did,” and Bunny spoke hurriedly, as if fearing lest Plodding Turtle should have an opportunity to tell about Jack Coon.

“I would like very much to hear both stories,” your Aunt Amy said, trying very hard not to laugh, for the expression on Mr. Rabbit’s face was very comical.

Mr. Turtle suddenly went into his shell, and, taking a seat on the log beside him, Bunny told the story of Miss Lamb’s folly.

“Once, not so very long ago, old Mr. Turtle spent a week or ten days going down to the village library, where he took out a book that had in it the story of Mary’s little lamb. He had a chance to read it two or three times before he got home, and then he found that Miss Lamb was at his house to take supper.

“He looked at her and then at the book, till it struck him that it would be a fine thing if she could be Mary’s lamb, and he told her a whole lot

of stuff about Mary's being such a nice girl, who loved the whole sheep family till she couldn't sleep unless she had one or two waiting around for her.



Miss Lamb Waiting Patiently.

“Miss Lamb was ready to be a pupil at school, and begged Mr. Turtle to tell her how she could find Mary. Of course he didn't know anything about it; but he looked wise, as if he had the whole business at his flippers' ends, and told her

all she'd have to do would be to wait around on the road near the pasture fence, till Mary came along, when the rest of it would be easy enough.

“Miss Lamb, thinking her bread would be all cake if she could adopt Mary, did as Mr. Turtle told her. She crawled under the fence so she might be in plain sight of everybody that passed by, and there she waited as patient as any statue.

“She waited, and waited, and waited until she thought that after all she was going to be disappointed, and was just about to give it up and go back to Mr. Turtle's home to tell him how many kinds of a foolish old shell-back he was, when along came a girl.

“‘This is Mary sure enough,’ Miss Lamb said to herself when the girl patted her on the head, and acted as if she'd like to have just such a lamb. ‘Mr. Turtle is an old fellow with a good deal of sound common sense, and I'll thank him as a lamb should, the first chance I have.’

“The two went down the road together for some distance, before Miss Lamb remembered that she hadn't asked where they were going, and then she said innocent-like:

“‘I suppose it won't be a great while before we get to the school?’

“‘We’re not going to school. Did you think that a big girl like me would be going to school, when she is needed at home to help take care of the other children?’

“‘Why, aren’t you Mary?’ Miss Lamb asked in surprise.

“‘Oh, no indeed. My name is Betty.’

“‘Did you have a lamb when you went to school?’

“‘Indeed I did not, but if I had owned one, you may be certain he would have been in the pasture where he belonged, instead of following me to school.’

“‘Then I’m not Mary’s little lamb at all,’ Miss Lamb cried in disappointment, wiping one eye with the softest corner of her front hoof. ‘I’m certain Mr. Turtle wouldn’t like it if I went off with anybody by the name of Betty.’

“‘Then she crept under the fence and went home, wishing she had spent her time eating the spring grass, and chewing daisies, instead of waiting for Mary, who wasn’t Mary after all, but only Betty. What Mr. Turtle said when she accused him of making her appear foolish, I never heard.’

“‘And you never will,’ Mr. Turtle said, suddenly poking his nose out of his shell, “because she didn’t accuse me. That was the time when

everybody was so worked up over the way you served Jack Coon that they couldn't think of anything else."

"You have said so much about the trouble Mr. Rabbit had with Mr. Coon that I am getting very eager to hear about it," your Aunt Amy said, and it almost seemed as if Mr. Turtle laughed, because he was so pleased at her desire to know what it was he wanted to tell.

MR. TURTLE MAKES A MISTAKE.

"Look here!" Bunny Rabbit cried suddenly, as if trying to change the subject of the conversation. "*Do* let me tell you why Plodding Turtle and Mrs. Porcupine are not as good friends as they used to be. The time was when one couldn't seem to get along without the other; but the other day, when Mr. Turtle was feeling real young, he asked Mrs. Porcupine if she knew how to play 'Pig.'

"Of course Mrs. Porcupine said she didn't; but would like very much to learn. Now you know that when any one plays 'pig' it is only to fool the person who never heard of the game, and Mr.

Turtle he was going to have some fun with Mrs. Porcupine.

“ Well, he told her to stand with her front feet on a rock, and shut her eyes. Then he went off a long ways to ask her again if she knew how to play ‘ pig ’ ; but while he was gone four big snakes crept up, and Mr. Turtle was so slow about getting anywhere that he didn’t see them.

“ Now you know that after you’ve got somebody standing around with their eyes shut, thinking something funny is going to happen, and ask them if they know how to play ‘ pig,’ the answer will be ‘ No,’ and then you say : ‘ Then stand there till you do.’

“ Well, that’s what Mr. Turtle said to Mrs. Porcupine, and he was laughing to split his sides when she opened her eyes, and saw the terrible snakes looking as if they were getting ready to bite her.

“ Oh me, oh my, how she *did* scream ! She thought Mr. Turtle had brought the snakes there to frighten her, and declares she will stick his nose full of quills if he ever dares to come around her house again.”

“ It was an accident that might have happened to any one,” Mr. Turtle snapped, “ and not



Mrs. Porcupine plays pig. Page 40.
Bunny Rabbit

a wicked, cruel thing, such as you did to Mr. Coon."

"So you're still aching to tell that foolish old story, are you?" Bunny asked sharply.

"I'm not aching very badly; but I'm going to tell it all the same," Mr. Turtle snapped, and Bunny Rabbit stretched himself out on the log as if to sleep, pretending that it made no difference to him what was said.

"I surely hope you will tell it this time," your Aunt Amy said, and again Plodding Turtle seemed to laugh.

THE SAD FATE OF MR. COON.

"Bunny Rabbit went one day last month to rob Mr. Jack Coon's turnip-crib, and Mr. Coon caught him in the very act," Mr. Turtle began. "He had both front paws and his mouth full of turnip, so of course it was no use for him to claim that he was only looking for clover leaves.

"'I'll march you straight off to jail, that's what I'll do with you,' Mr. Coon said, as he caught Bunny by both ears and twisted them around his paws so the thief couldn't get away.

"Then Bunny Rabbit began to beg, and he's a

rare hand at anything of that kind, when it's a case of saving his own skin.

“Don't march me off to jail!” he cried, the tears running down his cheeks. ‘Anything but that! I know I ought to be killed; throw me in the river—drown me; but don't, dear, kind, good Mr. Coon, don't march me off to jail!’



Bunny's Family Waiting for Turnips.

“All right,” said old Mr. Coon, paying no attention to Bunny Rabbit's tears. ‘I'm willing enough to kill you; but if I throw you into the river you'll swim out. I know you of

old, and that's what you're planning this very minute.’

“I was just coming to that part of it,” Bunny Rabbit said with a sigh. ‘I was going to ask you to tie my paws behind my back, so's I couldn't swim a stroke. You see I know I ought to die; but I'm afraid when I get in that cold water, I might try to swim, and so I want you to tie me.’

“Old Mr. Coon thought he had never seen such a repentant rabbit in all his days. There was something suspicious about it; but he set to work tying Bunny's front paws behind his back, and he did it good and tight. Then Bunny Rabbit stood on the bank of the river and wept, and the tears hopped down his furry little cheeks, but his paws were tied so he couldn't wipe them away. It was a piteous sight, so I've been told.

“‘Go up to the top of that high hill,’ Bunny said, speaking as if the sorrow was tearing his heart out. ‘Go up to the very top, and run down as fast as ever you can, so's to give me a good shove way out in the middle of the river, where I'll drown quick.’

“Then Mr. Coon went up the hill and ran down as fast as he could; but you see Bunny's hind paws hadn't been tied, and when Mr. Coon got close to him, he hopped aside as sprightly as a potato bug. Of course Mr. Coon couldn't stop in time, and splash he went into the river.

“‘Oh, save me! Save me, Brother Bunny Rabbit!’ he cried, for you see old Mr. Coon couldn't swim a little bit.

“‘I would, Mr. Coon,’ Bunny answered solemnly. ‘I surely would save your life, even if you did

threaten to march me off to jail, but you see you've tied my front paws, and I can't do the littlest mite of a thing.'

"So old Mr. Coon was drowned, and after he'd coaxed Mrs. Field Mouse to gnaw the rope apart,



Bunny Rabbit Going for Mr. Coon's Turnips.

Bunny Rabbit ran as fast as he could to Mr. Coon's turnip-crib, and took all the turnips he wanted."

"If you liked turnips you'd done the same

thing," Bunny cried, suddenly arousing from his pretended sleep. "Do you suppose a fellow is going to stand by and see himself killed, without so much as raising a finger to prevent it?"

"You needn't have murdered poor Mr. Coon while trying to save your own neck," Mr. Turtle said severely.

"How did I murder him? Weren't my paws tied so's I couldn't do even the littlest thing toward helping him out of the scrape?"

"Would you have helped him if you could, Bunny Rabbit?" Mr. Turtle asked sharply.

"That's got nothing to do with it. He killed himself by running so fast; I hadn't any hand in it."

"But he was doing only what you asked him to do," Mr. Turtle said, and he turned to your Aunt Amy, thinking she would take his side in the squabble; but she shook her head, saying:

"I think it best you two should settle the matter between yourselves."

"Well, Mr. Coon was only doing what Mr. Rabbit asked him to do," Mr. Turtle repeated.

MRS. BRAHMA'S QUEER FAMILY.

“Suppose he was?” Bunny asked scornfully. “Suppose I was to ask you to swallow your shell, and you killed yourself trying to be too obliging, would I be to blame? You remind me, with all your stories and poetry, of old Mrs. Brahma, who fussed around till she got a lot of different kind of eggs, and believed they'd all hatch out true-blooded Brahmas.

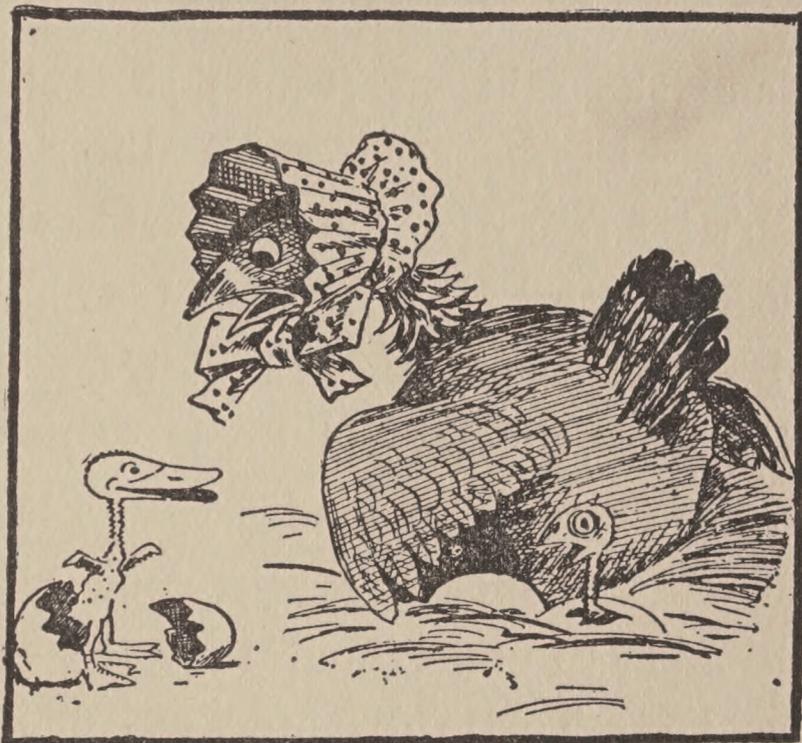
“When she got the eggs in the nest she spent her time figuring just what kind of a youngster would come out of each egg, as if she could tell by the color what was inside.

“‘There will be a nice snow-white chick come out of this shell,’ she cackled to herself. ‘Out of this a black chicken; in that a pretty Dominick, and from this you'll see a little brown fellow. Then, out of that egg in the middle will hatch a fine game chicken, whose feathers, when he grows up, will be red and green and yellow. My, my, what a set of chickens I shall have!’

“Of course she was very proud, and sat there until the day came when the eggs hatched. Well, what do you think? The first thing that came out of an egg was a funny little duck. He looked

up at the old hen with the oddest kind of a wink as he said 'quack, quack,' and then he wobbled off looking for a drink of water.

"Mrs. Brahma was very much surprised and disappointed, but her eyes opened wider when out



Old Mrs. Brahma's First Chicken.

of the next egg hopped a long-legged turkey, who said 'gobble, gobble,' and strutted away as if he owned the barn, nest and all.

"Then another shell opened and out stepped a guinea chicken, who made a queer noise with his teeth, as if he had a saw inside his head and was filing it, after which he toddled out into the barnyard.

"The next egg was a large one, and when the

shell split open a sad-faced gosling stuck his head out. By this time old Mrs. Brahma was bewildered, and when she saw the whole of the gosling's head, she turned on her heels and ran as fast as she could away from the place. She had never seen so many funny creatures hatched out before, and she said afterwards that she never wanted to see another such a collection."

"I don't for the life of me see what that story has to do with me," Mr. Turtle said as he popped his head out of the shell. "I didn't ask her to set on the eggs, neither did I go around telling that Mr. Frog could roar louder than a lion."

"That must be another story," your Aunt Amy said, beginning to understand that the more Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Turtle disputed, the more stories she would hear.

"So it is," Mr. Turtle replied eagerly, "and a very funny one, I think."

THE FROG'S BOAST.

"I only repeated what Mr. Frog told me," Bunny replied just a trifle sulkily.

"But you believed it, and got all the animals in the woods to come down by the pond and hear him," Mr. Turtle said with a scornful laugh, and



Mr. Frog trying his voice. Page 49.
Bunny Rabbit

then, turning toward your Aunt Amy, he added, "Bunny hunted around till he'd found everybody, and told them to be at the pond Saturday afternoon. He'd forgotten how he made a fool of himself about hearing an elephant in the water.

"Well, the lion and all his friends came, and Mr. Fox was chosen to sit well down in front and act the part of judge. When every one was ready, Bunny Rabbit called for Mr. Frog to come out, and he went and sat down by the lion as if he'd done some great thing.

"Mr. Frog came out on the bank with himself all swelled out; but even then he wasn't much larger than one of the cat-tails that grew near by, and after clearing his throat and waving his front feet, he began to sing 'ker-chug, ker-chune,' making his voice as hoarse as possible.

"All the animals waited patiently for him to roar, and he swelled out his throat bigger and bigger without making any more noise, till he split his mouth way back to his ears. Mr. Lion lost his temper just then, and stepped on Mr. Frog, flattening him till he looked like one of Mrs. Man's cookies. Mr. Fox snapped at Mr. Rabbit, and would have bitten his head off because he had fooled them so badly, if Bunny hadn't jumped

right over Mr. Ox's horns, running into the swamp faster than he ever ran before."

"If I couldn't have moved faster than you do, I'd never been able to find all the animals," Bunny Rabbit said sharply.

"I may be a bit slow now and then; but I don't have to run away from small boys and toy dogs," Mr. Turtle snapped.

Your Aunt Amy looked sharply at Mr. Rabbit, understanding that the opportunity for another story had come.

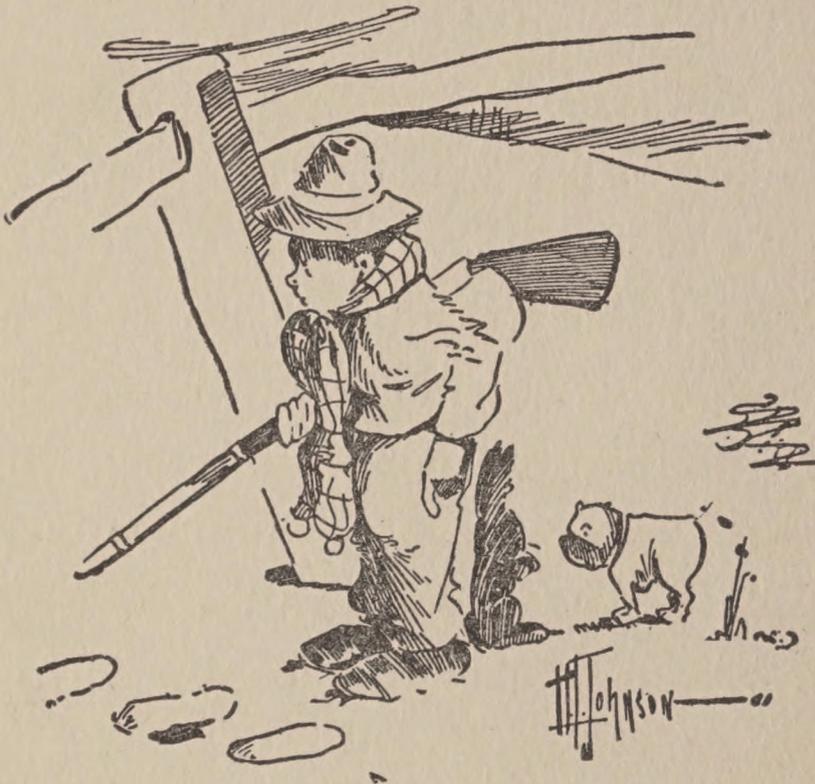
"You don't have to because you can't," Bunny Rabbit replied with a laugh. "When little boys come around where you are, they roll you over half a dozen times, and then give up trying to get any fun out of you. I suppose you're thinking of the time when you thought you saw me running away from that little Man boy?"

TOMMY MAN GOES HUNTING.

"I didn't *think* anything about it, for I saw you going as fast as your legs would carry you," Mr. Turtle replied.

"Did you run away from him?" your Aunt Amy asked, and Mr. Rabbit replied:

“That was because I had to meet a rabbit, and didn't have time to try his way of getting over the ground. There wasn't any need of my running because of Tommy Man, and when I tell the story you'll see there wasn't. I'm rather proud of what I did that day.



The Rabbit Hunter and Mr. Towser.

“You see Tommy Man is near-sighted and deaf, by reason of having had the scarlet fever. I know him well; his home and mine are quite near together—we're what you might call neighbors. I'm free to admit that it was a close call for me at one time, and if I hadn't had my wits about me,

I might have gone home with Tommy to stay till after the rabbit pie had been eaten.

“Tommy came out to look for me, and had followed my tracks down to the fence before I knew what was in the wind. Then I had to make the fur fly in order to double back on my trail to get behind the boy, and there I sat waiting for a chance to make a bold break to cover, when up came Mr. Towser Dog.

“It looked to me as if I was in a mighty tight place, and I knew that nothing but real wit would save me. I put on a brave look, as if boys or dogs didn't bother me any, and said to Mr. Towser:



“‘Good morning, sir, you're looking well to-day.’

“Mr. Towser growled in a most ill-mannered way; but I squatted on my hind legs as if to have a regular visit, and asked the dog:

“‘Are you out hunting?’

Mr. Towser is Angry. “‘Yes, you idiot,’ Mr. Towser said as if he was angry, and hadn't quite decided whether he'd jump on me then, or wait till his master got ready to find out that the game was behind him.

“‘Are you looking for rabbits?’ I asked as if it didn't seem possible he could be thinking of such a thing.

“‘Of course I'm looking for rabbits. What else would I be out here after?’ Mr. Towser said real impolitely.

“‘Rabbits, eh?’ I said half to myself. ‘Well now that's strange.’

“‘Why is it strange?’ Mr. Towser asked, beginning to grow curious.

“‘Because you're not a rabbit dog,’ I said, speaking soft as mush. ‘Now if I was in your place I wouldn't bother with such small game. As I size you up, my friend, I take you to be a bulldog. Am I right?’



“‘That's what I am,’ and Mr. Towser swelled out his chest in great shape.

Mr. Towser is
Curious.

“‘Then, my dear fellow,’ I said, looking at his ugly face as if I thought it very beautiful, ‘it's bad form for one of your breeding to be seen in the company of cotton-tail rabbits like me. You should choose your friends from a different set than mine.’

“By this time Mr. Dog was all puffed up with pride, and he tried to laugh as he said in quite a friendly tone:

“‘It does seem to be rather absurd for a bulldog to be hunting rabbits, doesn't it? I hadn't thought of that before, I really hadn't.’

“Then, nodding to me as if we had really been friends, he turned his back on little Tommy Man, and ran toward home. I remembered that I'd promised to meet a rabbit, and hurried off in the other direction; but it wasn't because I was afraid of what Tommy might do. Why, I've stepped right up to Mr. Man, and, what's more, got the best of him after that!”

“How is that, Mr. Rabbit?” your Aunt Amy asked, knowing the little fellow was ready to tell another story; but before he could reply Mr. Turtle interrupted.

“If Bunny Rabbit has settled down to tell of the brave things he thinks he has done, there'll be no chance for any one else to get in a word edgeways,” Mr. Turtle said in a fretful tone. “He believes there isn't another person in this world equal to him in smartness; but I notice that 'Squire Owl makes him toe the mark.”

“I ain't afraid of the 'Squire except after dark,

when I can't see him very well," Bunny said bravely, whereupon Mr. Turtle asked with a sneer: "Did you ever see the poetry Mr. Crow's oldest



Mr. Crow's Daughter.

daughter made about the love which 'Squire Owl has for your family?"

"No," Bunny cried eagerly and excitedly. "Have you got it tucked away in your shell?"

MR. OWL AT DINNER.

"She gave my wife a copy of the verses, and I guess I can find it somewhere."

"Look for it, will you, dear Mr. Turtle?" and now Bunny spoke in a pleading tone. "If young Miss Crow has written anything about my family, I surely would like to hear it."

Mr. Turtle's head disappeared, and a moment

later a folded paper was thrust out of the shell.
Bunny seized it eagerly, and read aloud :

“ Waiter, where's the bill of fare ?
Same old dishes, I declare.
Rat-tail soup, and fresh mouse stew.
Can't you bring me something new ? ”



'Squire Owl at Dinner.

Then the waiter scratched his head ;
“ Rabbit's very good,” he said.
“ That's the very thing to fetch up,”
Cried the owl, “ and lots of ketchup.”

“Bring it soon, I have a date
At the club at half-past eight;
When I speak I always feel
Better if I've had a meal.”

“I can't see that there's very much about the rabbit family,” Bunny said in a tone of disappointment, as he ceased reading. “What is the meaning of it all? I can't see why Mr. Turtle wanted to stick that thing in our faces just now, unless it was because Miss Crow wrote it. She ain't very much of a poet, and I ought to know something about making verses, for I've had considerable experience.”

Just at this moment Mr. Turtle gave vent to a most scornful laugh, and Bunny hopped off the log to hunt for clover; but, failing to find any, came back to boast of having “got the best of Mr. Man.”

“I surely hope you will tell that, or some other story,” your Aunt Amy said quickly, and Mr. Rabbit replied:

“I won't go away without telling how I fooled Mr. Man, even if Plodding is so angry that he'd like to bite his own tail, but can't because his shell is so stiff that he ain't able to get at it.”

“I'll bite my tail if I want to,” Mr. Turtle

snapped sharply as he half-turned on the log to face Bunny once more. "You'll find that when Mr. Rabbit gets the best of anybody it's by some underhanded trick, the same as he served out to Jack Coon, or by telling what isn't true. He's like Tommy Ape who traveled with the circus, and was always bragging about how he knocked Spottie Leopard silly."

HOW MR. APE WHIPPED MR. LEOPARD.

"What's that?" Bunny Rabbit asked quickly, suddenly growing interested. "It must be the only one of your stories that I haven't heard a dozen times over."

"This one isn't so very old, and, besides, I'm not in the habit of telling things more than once, while there are some that I haven't whispered to a single person, as for example, the trick I played on your great-grandfather."

"I'm not very much interested in the old gentleman, so go ahead with the yarn about Tommy Ape," Bunny said with a sneer.

"One day Spottie Leopard was out walking for his health, and met Tommy Ape on the road," Mr. Turtle began. "Because he was feeling a

bit hungry, and because Tommy had been saucy to him a short time before, Mr. Leopard concluded that a slice of ape meat was what he needed very badly.

“I'm going to eat you, Tommy, and I won't



Mr. Leopard and Tommy Ape.

even button your ears back when I swallow you,' he said.

“Very well,' Mr. Ape replied, mild as a sick sparrow. 'I suppose I can't help myself, and I

hope you'll have a good time, for I always liked you.'

"'Thank you,' said Mr. Leopard.

"'Yes,' Tommy went on meekly, 'you've been a good friend of mine, and I want you to allow me to do you a favor before you cut my throat.'

"'What is it?' asked Mr. Leopard.

"'I have in this cocoanut an immense sum of money,' Tommy said earnestly, as if he was telling the truth for the last time in his life, 'and I want to make you a present of it. You will be rich and happy all the rest of your life.'

"'Thank you,' said Mr. Leopard.

"'And to be sure that it is all here, I want to break the cocoanut open.'

"'Of course,' said Mr. Leopard.

"'And as there are no stones around here, I shall have to ask that you let me crack the nut on your head.'

"'Very well,' said Mr. Leopard.

"Then the sly Tommy took the cocoanut between his two hands, and gave Mr. Leopard such a good blow on the skull that the big fellow fell over on the ground as if he was dead. Before Mr. Leopard came to his senses, Mr. Thomas Ape was many miles away."

As he ceased speaking Mr. Turtle looked out of the corner of his eye slyly at Bunny Rabbit, most likely thinking he would be angry ; but Mr. Rabbit appeared deeply interested.

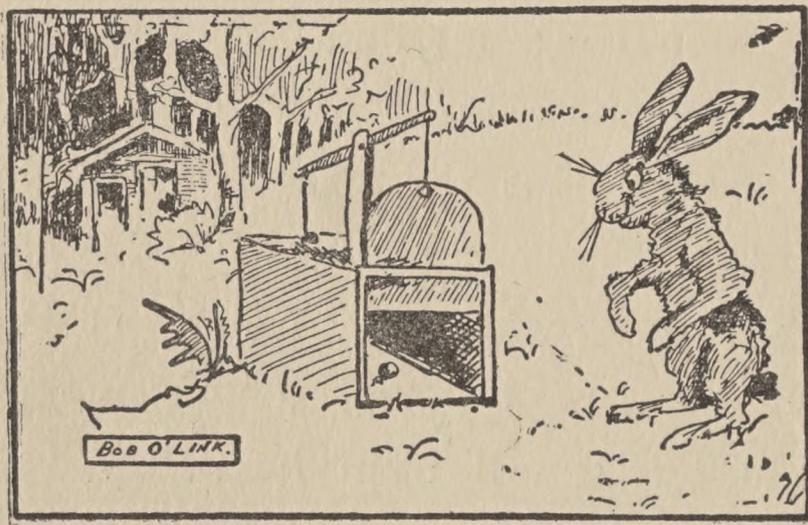
“That’s what I call a good trick,” Bunny said approvingly. “I never met Tommy Ape ; but if I ever do come across him he shall know my opinion. He and I ought to be partners, for I got the best of Mr. Man almost as nicely.”

It was evident that Mr. Turtle had failed of teaching Bunny a lesson on the sin of telling that which was not true ; but, on the contrary, had only given him encouragement to continue in his evil ways. And all this the old fellow understood, for he sighed deeply as he scratched his nose with one front flipper, while Mr. Rabbit, crossing one hind leg over the other in a most comfortable position, began to tell what he believed was his best trick.

Then it was Mr. Turtle would have put an end to the story-telling, by trying to bite Mr. Bunny’s short tail ; but your Aunt Amy put an end to such mischief by taking a position between the two, after which Bunny Rabbit began :

THE TRAP MR. MAN SET.

“One day when I was hopping around in the woods looking for something to eat, I saw a large trap which had been set by Mr. Man. No one believes I'd be foolish enough to walk into such a thing, for I am pretty well up on the tricks of this world ; but I looked the property over to see if it was worth spending my time on.



The Trap and the Carrot.

“Inside was the biggest, nicest looking carrot I ever saw. It made my mouth water, and I tried to figure some plan for getting it without putting myself in a hole. Two or three times I came near giving up the job as a bad one, and then I said to myself :

“‘Look here, Bunny, that carrot just the same as belongs to you, and you’ve got to have it by hook or by crook, it don’t make any difference which.’

“It seemed as if talking to myself gave me just the right idea, and in another minute I was trotting off to Mr. Man’s house in the woods. I knew pretty well where to find it, and it wasn’t a great while before I was pounding on his door, the same as if I was a policeman.

“‘Hello, Mr. Man, come out here!’

“Mr. Man stuck his head out of the window.

“‘What do you want around here, you idle villain?’ he asked as if he wanted to bite my head off.

“‘Please, Mr. Man, will you give me a brick?’ I asked, speaking soft, as if I had a hot potato in my mouth.

“‘What do you want with a brick?’ he asked, sticking his head a little further out, and looking me over from ears to tail.

“‘I am tired of life and want to die,’ I said, looking terribly sorrowful. ‘I’ll tie the brick around my neck, and jump into the pond. You’ll never be troubled with me again.’

“Of course Mr. Man wanted to get rid of me

because I'd done him a good bit of harm about the place, and he passed out the brick as soon as he could find it.

"I tucked the brick under my arm and started for the pond, he watching till I'd got behind the alders, and then I ran across to where the trap was standing. Then I tied the brick to the other end of the lever and held the trap door, and it wasn't any trick after that to get the carrot without running the risk of being caught.

"You see it wouldn't do to carry off Mr. Man's brick, else he might say I'd been stealing, so I left it in the trap, with a note that said, 'Please leave this brick right here till I get time to use it; I've been called away on important business, and may be gone two or three days.'

"I haven't got back since; but I don't expect Mr. Man is sitting up nights watching for me, because most likely he has a suspicion that I didn't want to drown myself in the pond half as much as I wanted that carrot."

"Between such tricks as that, and stealing, I don't see any difference," Mr. Turtle remarked. "In the first place, Mr. Bunny Rabbit, you set out to tell a regular lie, and that's wicked. Then you don't hesitate to steal——"

"You can't put your flipper on a single thing I ever really stole in all my life!" Bunny cried angrily.

"What about Jack Coon's turnips?"

"Oh, they don't count," and Bunny scratched his ear in perplexity, for it seemed very much as if Plodding Turtle was bent on reading him a lesson which he had no desire to learn.

"If I could take pride in such things, you'd have heard a full hundred times over of the trick I played on your great-grandfather; but *I* try to be honest, and if it so happens that I haven't done just right, I hold my tongue, instead of running around the neighborhood bragging about my dishonesty."

"Suppose you tell us the story of the trick you played on Mr. Rabbit's great-grandfather," your Aunt Amy said, and she really wanted to hear it, as well as to suggest that which would put an end to the quarreling.

Bunny's face brightened; if he could get Mr. Turtle to telling a story regarding something he had done, then the lesson on honesty would be postponed, and he began coaxing and flattering old Plodding in a way that was comical.

HOW MR. TURTLE WON THE RACE.

“Please, dear, kind, good Mr. Turtle, won't you tell me how you got the best of my great-grandfather? Of course I ought to know all that's going around about the family, and, besides, it makes me feel so good to hear you tell of what you did years and years ago. You must have been a wonderful bright young turtle.”

“I wasn't dumb, and that's a fact,” Mr. Turtle said with a smile of satisfaction, “and I did get the best of your great-grandfather in fine style, without being forced to do anything that was downright dishonest.”

Bunny continued to coax and flatter, however, until Mr. Turtle crawled on the highest point of the log, where the full rays of the sun would strike directly on his shell, and there, for the first time, did Plodding Turtle explain truthfully how it happened that he won the race from Bunny's great-grandfather.

“You see folks have always believed that I won the race by plodding along at my usual gait, while old Mr. Rabbit frisked around, and fooled, and



The race between Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Turtle. Page 66.
Bunny Rabbit

wasted his time showing off before the judge and those who had come to see the fun.

“That idea is all wrong, though up to this minute I've kept my mouth shut on the subject, because so much has been said that it seems too bad to spoil what folks have come to believe is a good thing, though between us three, I want to say right here that all the plodding one can do will never win anything, unless there's a little thought and common sense to go with it.

“I came out ahead because I put my wits to work, and in an honest way, with no such trickery as Bunny Rabbit seems to delight in; but I must confess that but for the spite I had against Mr. Yellow Dog, I might never have thought out the scheme. Mr. Dog turned me over on my back one day when he found me asleep, and I didn't get to my feet again for two days, when I was nearly starved, to say nothing of the worry it caused Mrs. Turtle and the children.

“Well, when old Mr. Rabbit, Bunny's great-grandfather, and I started out on that race you've heard so much about, I knew at the beginning that I didn't have any chance to win simply by plodding along, for it would have taken me a week, at full speed, to travel the mile; but I

wasn't going to let old Mr. Rabbit know how I felt about it.

"I was mighty blue while we waited for the signal to go; but my heart jumped right into my mouth when Mr. Yellow Dog happened along to see the fun. He had made up his mind to give me a sly dig about his having turned me over, so came up where I stood, and said sociable like :

"'Good morning, Mr. Turtle. This is a nice day for the race, eh? No dust, and not too much sun.'

"Then it was that a great scheme popped into my head, and I answered him back as if I'd forgotten all about the mean trick he played on me :

"'It *is* a nice day, Mr. Dog. If you're wanting to see the start, why don't you sit down here near me, where there won't be any one to get in your light? I reckon it'll be a great show.'

"Well, down he sat on his tail not three inches from where I was standing, his mouth wide open, which showed that he surely wasn't used to keeping company with those who knew what good manners were, and his red tongue hanging out like a piece of sausage. He seemed to think the folks were looking at him, instead of old Mr. Rabbit and me, and never knew when I crept a bit closer to the end of his tail.

“One! Two! Three! Go!” yelled Mr. Fox, the starter, and my chance had come.

“I grabbed Mr. Dog's tail between my jaws, and nipped hard enough to let him know he had a visitor. He gave one yell of terror and surprise, and set off through the woods toward the finish



Mr. Turtle Gets a Start in the Race.

post at lightning speed, pulling me through the air after him, for I took good care not to lose my hold.

“My! but we did fly! I never went over the country so fast before, and I held on for all I was worth till we got within four feet of the finish post, when I let go of Mr. Dog's tail, and walked

in the rest of the way. But I won the race; I tell you brains count! It was what I call showing good sound sense, with nothing dishonest about it."

"Did you tell my great-grandfather how you got there so quickly?" Bunny Rabbit asked sharply.

"Of course I didn't, else he would have said that I hadn't really won the race," Mr. Turtle replied mildly.

"And you sit up and say there wasn't anything dishonest about it?" Bunny asked sternly.

"For sure there wasn't," Mr. Turtle said positively. "Didn't I come in ahead?"

"But you deceived the poor old rabbit, making him think you had paddled along all the way. I call it just the same as telling a lie, for you to hold your tongue, and it really was stealing, when you took credit for what you never did."

A LETTER FOR MR. RABBIT.

Mr. Turtle thrust out his head in a very angry fashion, and there was every sign of a stormy time between him and Bunny Rabbit; but, fortunately, just at that moment Simon Woodpecker came

flying down in great haste, holding in his beak a daintily perfumed envelope.

“A letter for Mr. Rabbit,” Simon said, as he dropped the missive under Bunny’s nose, and that young rascal looked up with a sly wink of his left eye as he wagged his right ear, much as if to say



Yours Devotedly,
Catherine Ape.

that he suspected it was from some young lady who had fallen in love with his whiskers.

“Please open it, Mr. Rabbit,” Simon pleaded, “I’m just dying to know what is inside.”

“Cross your throat never to tell?” Bunny asked as he carefully opened the envelope.

Simon promised in due form, and a look of dismay overspread Mr. Rabbit's face as he drew forth the photograph which you see here.

Bunny gasped as one does when suddenly plunged into a bath-tub filled with cold water, and then looked around as if frightened.

"Say, fellows," he cried imploringly, "please, don't ever tell about this, will you? I'm sorry to leave so soon; but my wife is expecting me to get some lettuce for the children's supper, and I can't stay here another minute."



Bunny Rabbit on His Way Home.

Having said this he hopped away as rapidly as ever did his great-grandfather when he ran the race with Mr. Turtle.

Simon Woodpecker felt it his duty to inform Miss Ape that he had delivered the missive according to agreement, and as he flew away Professor Frog came swimming down the pond, whereupon old Mr. Turtle believed that he had better keep out of sight, therefore the meeting was suddenly brought to a close.

Then, because there was no hope of hearing any

more stories that day, your Aunt Amy went home, hoping she might be so fortunate as to soon meet other animals who might be willing to entertain her.

THE END.

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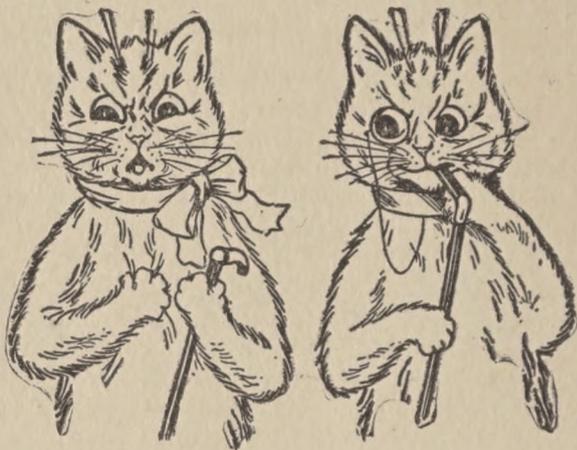
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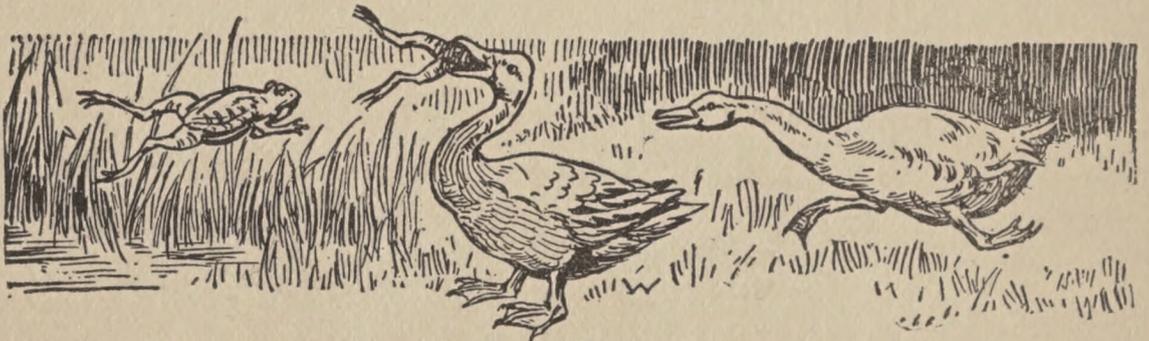
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